

# Manager union joins SEIU

## Decries town's 'stalling, control practices'

By JUSTIN GRAEBER, CLIPPER EDITOR  
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Members of the Duxbury Professional Employees Association have filed paperwork with the town's labor attorney stating their intention to join the Service Employees International Union.

In a written statement,

published in the Clipper this week (see full letter on page 13) members of the DPEA said they were moving forward in cooperation with the larger union.

The letter also accused the town of "stalling, control practices and legal maneuvering."

"It continues to baffle

DPEA members that the concept of fairness and equity for all employees has been objected to so vehemently," the letter reads.

Selectman Andre Martecchini denied the town has been deliberately impeding the negotiation process.

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"It hasn't stalled on our end," he said. "We've been desperately trying to get them to come to the table."

The efforts to form a professional managers union in Duxbury first became public in May. The DPEA is led by Police Chief Mark DeLuca and Library Director Elaine Winquist. Officers include Deputy Fire Chief William Carrico, selectmen assistant Anne Murray, and Water Superintendent Paul Anderson. Nancy Denman, head of children's services at the Duxbury Free Library, is serving as a spokeswoman for the union.

"Even if you don't want to be in it, it's not about you, it's about your positions," he said, adding those who object to the union feel they're "on an island. ...It's the most divisive thing I've ever seen."

He also said he and others involved are uncomfortable with the police chief being one of the driving forces of the union, and are fearful of retaliation.

"We don't know if we're going to get speeding tickets, or what," he said.



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Denman said there is no dissension and the group is moving forward.

"It was a 100 percent unanimous vote with the people that were involved," she said.

The DPEA letter states fear of retaliation and retribution is also an issue for the town employees who are seeking protection in the union.

"DPEA attempts to communicate should not have resulted in the current situation which is less communication and, for some employees, an inability to complete their job due to daily retribution for participating," the letter reads.

Denman said the manager's union filed a petition with the state labor board on Friday. DuPere said the next step would be a hearing before that body between the town and representatives from SEIU.

The SEIU has two million members and is the second largest union representing public employees, according to their Web site. They already represent employees in Duxbury, including some library workers.

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SEIU

In the letter association members say the presence of the town's labor attorney in the spring of 2007 "forced DPEA into an attorney situation instead of open, frank conversation about the by-law.

"It has been implied that our actions are the results of a few disgruntled employees or personal vendettas," the letter reads. "This is not true ... Members of the DPEA are true professionals and consider it an honor to work for the people of Duxbury."

Town attorney Fred DuPere said his office received the paper work from SEIU Tuesday morning.

Although DuPere said the association has withdrawn its original petition with the state Labor Relations Board, the issue in question — which positions would be allowed to unionize — has not been resolved.

"The town believes certain positions were managerial and therefore not able to be in a union," he said.

According to one source, there are approximately 18 management positions the town and the union are negotiating over. Some of the position may not be allowed in the union even if the town agrees. Under Mass. general law chapter 150E, department chiefs are prohibited from joining collective bargaining units.

Town hall managers are not all behind the union move, according to one manager who spoke under a condition of anonymity, citing fear of retaliation.

"There's been a definite fracturing of the department heads," the manager said, who added he has always been against the union.

The manager said at a recent meeting of people who would be eligible for the union, several employees on the fence were given an ultimatum.

"Either sign the cards today or get up and get out of here," he said. "People walked out."

The manager said the employees against the union felt powerless to stop it, since the organization had enough votes to proceed.